

The President's Radio Address *March 4, 2006*

Good morning. I have been traveling this past week in South Asia on a trip to Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan.

My first stop was Afghanistan, and I was thrilled to see firsthand the incredible transformation that has taken place there. Before September the 11th, 2001, Afghanistan was ruled by a cruel regime that oppressed its people, brutalized women, and gave safe haven to the terrorists who attacked America.

Today, the terror camps have been shut down, women are working, boys and girls are back in school, and 25 million people have now tasted freedom. The Afghan people are building a vibrant, young democracy that is an ally in the war on terror, and America is proud to have such a determined partner in the cause of freedom.

I was pleased to visit with President Karzai and members of his Cabinet and Government. I told them America will stand with the Afghan people as they build a free society and fight our common enemies, and we will see the mission through without wavering.

I was honored to visit our troops at Bagram Air Base who are serving on the frontlines of the war on terror. It was a privilege to thank them in person for their courage and for the sacrifice of their families back home. These fine Americans are standing watch for liberty halfway across the world, and I told them that all Americans were proud of them.

The next stop on my trip was India. Like America, India has endured terrorist attacks on its own soil. Like America, India is a democracy that understands the best way to ensure peace is to advance freedom. And like America, India is working to help nations like Afghanistan build the institutions of a free and democratic society.

Relations between the United States and India have never been better. One impor-

tant aspect of this partnership is working together to meet the energy needs of our growing economies, especially through the use of clean and safe nuclear power. On my trip, the United States and India reached an historic agreement to share civilian nuclear technology as India brings its civilian nuclear programs under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. This agreement is good for American security because it will bring India's civilian nuclear program into the international nonproliferation mainstream.

The agreement also is good for the American economy. The agreement will help meet India's surging energy needs, and that will lessen India's growing demand for other energy supplies and help restrain energy prices for American consumers.

Another important aspect of this partnership is the growing trade between our two countries. In the past 10 years, India has passed economic reforms that have opened its door to trade and helped raised the living standards for millions of its people. In my meetings with Prime Minister Singh, I made clear that trade between our countries must be free and fair. I know that America's workers can compete with anyone, anytime, anywhere, so long as the rules are fair.

Ultimately, the best way to create jobs for Americans is to expand markets for American products. Today, India is one of the fastest-growing export markets for goods, services, and crops. India has now a growing middle class that is estimated at 300 million people—more than the entire population of the United States. Middle class Indians are buying home appliances from American companies like Whirlpool. Younger Indians are enjoying McCurry meals from McDonald's. And Air India has recently ordered 68 planes from Boeing. Last year, our exports to India grew by

more than 30 percent. And all this trade is creating jobs and opportunity in America. So we will continue to work to level the playing field for our workers, farmers, and businesses—and deliver a better life for all Americans.

The final stop on my trip was Pakistan, another important ally in the war on terror. After September the 11th, 2001, President Musharraf understood that he had to make a fundamental choice. He could turn a blind eye and leave his people hostage to the terrorists, or he could join the free world in fighting the terrorists.

President Musharraf made the right choice for his people, and America appreciates his leadership. Since he joined the fight against terror, President Musharraf has faced several attempts on his life, yet President Musharraf has not faltered. He understands that the terrorists are a threat to the peace and security of the Pakistani people and the world.

Our relations with Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan will enhance the security of our country. By working with these leaders and the people of these three nations, we're seizing the opportunities this new century offers and helping to lay the foundations of peace and prosperity for generations to come.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:05 a.m. on March 3 in the Muarya Sheraton Hotel and Towers in New Delhi, India, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m., e.s.t., on March 4. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 3 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. Due to the 5-hour time difference, the radio address was broadcast after the President's midday remarks in Islamabad, Pakistan. In his address, the President referred to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India; and President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan in Islamabad

March 4, 2006

Mr. President and Mrs. Musharraf and distinguished guests, Laura and I thank you for the warm and gracious welcome. It's such a pleasure to be here in Pakistan. We've had a fantastic day. I was fooled by a googly. [*Laughter*] Otherwise, I'd have been a better batsman. But it's been a full day, Mr. President, and your hospitality has overwhelmed us, and thank you.

I bring greetings from my fellow citizens, in particular the thousands of Pakistani Americans who call my land home, folks who have really made a tremendous contribution to the United States of America.

Our nations are strong allies, Mr. President. We're allies in the war on terror, and we're allies in laying the foundation

of lasting peace. In the struggle in the war on terror, Pakistan and America has lost many good citizens. And we ask for God's blessings on their families. Pakistan's efforts to enhance peace and security have earned the respect and the admiration of the American people. When the terrorists are defeated and when the peace is won, our two nations will share the peace together.

The American people care deeply about the people of Pakistan. We watched with horror and great sorrow as last year's earthquake devastated this ancient land. Americans have experienced the trauma of natural disasters in our own country, and we've witnessed the power of friendship to rebuild lives and to restore hope. I'm proud